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C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 001087

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NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE AND IPA. NSC FOR SHAPIRO/KUMAR

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/27/2019  
TAGS: [IS](#) [KPAL](#) [KWBG](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#)  
SUBJECT: ABU MAZEN BUILDS SUPPORT FOR A FATAH SIXTH PARTY  
CONGRESS IN BETHLEHEM IN AUGUST

REF: A. OSC GMP20090625745001  
[1](#)B. JERUSALEM 775

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles, per reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. President Mahmud Abbas (Abu Mazen) successfully used a June 23-24 Fatah Revolutionary Council (FRC) meeting to garner support for holding Fatah's Sixth General Congress on August 4, 2009, in Bethlehem. FRC members backed Abu Mazen's plan on the condition that Fatah delegates from Gaza and other Arab countries can freely attend. This decision came after Fatah Central Committee (FCC) members Ahmad Qurei and Muhammad Ghnaim announced support for holding the Congress in the West Bank. Access for Gazan and diaspora delegates hinges on cooperation from both Hamas and the GoI. A translation of the FRC's statement can be found in ref A. End Summary.

FRC CONDITIONALLY ENDORSES WEST BANK CONGRESS  
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[1](#)2. (C) Abu Mazen secured support from the FRC for his plan to hold the Fatah Sixth General Congress in Bethlehem on August 4, 2009, with 1,550 delegates. The FRC issued a statement following its June 23-24 meetings, saying that attendance of members from Gaza and abroad is essential for the Congress to take place. It called for a committee headed by Ahmad Qurei (Abu Ala'a) to ensure participation of all delegates. A majority of the FRC members present endorsed the statement without significant opposition, according to Fatah PLC bloc leader Azzam al-Ahmad.

[1](#)3. (C) The FRC's decision came after two FCC/FRC members, Ahmad Qurei and Muhammad Ghnaim (Abu Maher), withdrew their opposition to Abu Mazen, agreeing to support his plan to hold the Congress in the West Bank. Fatah grassroots activists speculate that Abu Mazen promised Qurei and Ghnaim that they will keep their FCC positions in exchange for their support. Qurei and Ghnaim's shift leaves FCC members Faruq Qaddumi and Muhammad Jihad as the two principal opponents of holding the Congress in the West Bank.

HAMAS, ISRAELI INTRANSIGENCE  
COULD POSTPONE CONGRESS DATE  
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[1](#)4. (C) One of the FRC's General Secretaries, Adnan Samara, told PolSpec June 25 that, if upcoming discussions between Fatah and Hamas in Cairo go poorly, Hamas might prevent Gazan delegates from attending the Congress. The GoI might also refuse entrance to some delegates from abroad, he said. Samara said that the roughly 400 delegates from abroad could be accommodated by video conference. If the roughly 350 Gazan delegates cannot attend, the Congress will be postponed. In that case, he said, the FCC and FRC will convene to determine next steps.

